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# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

## Mississippian learns meaning of missions

By Betty Poor  
*FMB Americas Correspondent*

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay—Mississippian Paula Smith thought being a missionary meant "teaching school and learning another language like Lottie Moon."

Now as a church promoter in Uruguay, she said her real job is "to be friends with women."

The language she has learned is Spanish, but she also communicates a language of love. Her home is open to women who come here to the capital city for medical attention or just need a place to stay.

Paula works with Baptist women all over Uruguay leading workshops, and she helps with camps every summer.

People she doesn't even know call her and say, "Aren't you the WMU person? Can we stay at your house?"

"In that way I've formed many true friendships," she said.

Born into a pastor's home in Greenwood, Paula credits her interest in missions to the influence of North Carrollton Church, North Carrollton.

Paula's father, W. Martin Smith, was pastor of North Carrollton, and her Sunbeam leader was Alva Montgomery.

"I don't think she ever left Mississippi, but she showed me the world," Paula said.

"A lot of missionaries came through, and they would stay at our house," she added. "Missions wasn't anything new to me, but it was always an interest."

Paula accepted Christ when she was 10, and woke up her parents in the middle of the night when she was 12 to tell them she was going to be a missionary.

She studied elementary education, receiving an associate of arts degree from Clarke College in Newton, a bachelor of arts degree from William Carey College in Hattiesburg, and a master of religious education degree from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

Another "crossroads" came in Paula's life when she finished college and was engaged to be married to a young man who did not share her mission calling.

She was working on the summer staff at Ridgecrest Assembly in North Carolina when she decided to settle her dilemma once and for all.

She climbed Rattlesnake Mountain and told the Lord she was not coming down until an answer came.

"I didn't have long to wait," Paula said. "A cloud came out below me, it rained under me, and the sun was above me. I thought, 'Yes Sir, we're on holy ground here.'

"I understand, I'm supposed to be a missionary, and don't



MEANING OF MISSIONS — Mississippian Paula Smith (center) confers with Uruguayan women's leader and good friend, Monica Silva, (right) before a meeting of the Uruguayan national Baptist Women's executive board in Monica's home. Fellow missionary Mary Anne Davis (left) also participated in the meeting. (FMB photo by Betty Poor)

look back—not ever again, and I never have looked back again."

To gain experience before missionary appointment, Paula served as minister of education and youth at First Church, Flowood; minister of youth at North Carrollton Church; and minister of education at First Church, Water Valley.

She also served as a summer missionary in Massachusetts and Israel. She was appointed to Uruguay in May 1989.

Paula was named to do women's work, but this has evolved into more general religious education promotion.

In addition to doing women's leadership workshops, camps and other kinds of Christian education training,

she is active in the Bethesda Church in Montevideo.

She serves as president of the church's music committee, substitute Sunday School teacher for the young adults, and music leader for three home Bible studies the church sponsors.

"Our church is baptizing and discipling people right and left," she said. "The church is just great."

"I never have taught school," Paula laughed, but she has used her education background in many other ways.

Folks in Mississippi may not have realized they were investing in a world-wide ministry when they taught little Paula Smith — but they were.

### Looking back

10 years ago

Peace committee chairman Charles Fuller, pastor of First Church, Roanoke, Va. expresses "genuine regret" about the inability of the Peace Committee to complete their report in time for release prior to the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention in St Louis. He had hoped to release a report six weeks in advance of the annual meeting.

20 years ago

Chuck Endsley, a student at William Carey College in Hattiesburg, will serve as organist for sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City and as accompanist for the Southern Baptist Singing Men. Endsley serves as organist and artist in residence at Calvary Church, Jackson.

50 years ago

Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain graduates 53 students at its 74th annual commencement. E. D. Head, president of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth preaches the Baccalaureate sermon. Chester Swor of Jackson delivers the commencement address.

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# Audit can bolster confidence in restructuring

**O**n June 17 — the first day of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Dallas — messengers will be asked to approve the final legal steps necessary to complete the total restructuring of the world's largest Protestant denomination.

Messengers to the preceding two annual meetings in Atlanta and New Orleans gave their assent to the Covenant for a New Century, the restructuring blueprint. With those two votes, the modernization of the Southern Baptist Convention was put into motion by the Implementation Task Force (ITF).

Change is good. No organization — secular, religious, non-profit, or for-profit — can survive for an extended period of time without critically assessing whether the needs and expectations of its customers are being met in the most efficient possible manner.

On the surface, that may sound more like a business fact than a religious principle. However, Southern Baptists should bear in mind that God has richly blessed us for well over a century with the worldwide resources and organization to reach our "customers" — those lost souls in need of Christ.

There is no more important business on the face of the earth, and business owners from the stockholders of IBM to the local sandwich shop would love to claim the success rate Southern Baptists have enjoyed in reaching our "customer" base.

Change ignored has been the downfall of many a business. The company that manufactured Dumont televisions had a virtual corner on the market in the early 1950's, but where is the company now?

For almost a year, "The Baptist Record" has undergone massive changes in an

effort to modernize the look, feel, and content that subscribers expect today and in the future. The newspaper's staff is determined that this publication will not go the way of the dinosaurs because we couldn't respond to a changing environment.

The organizational charts of many Southern Baptist state conventions have undergone major changes. The Arkansas convention is the latest to restructure. Mississippi did it several years ago.

So it is with the Southern Baptist Convention. We have prayed throughout this restructuring process for God's guidance, and we should continue to pray for the implementation of this process. Southern Baptists simply cannot afford to lose the evangelistic momentum that has been building for well over a century.

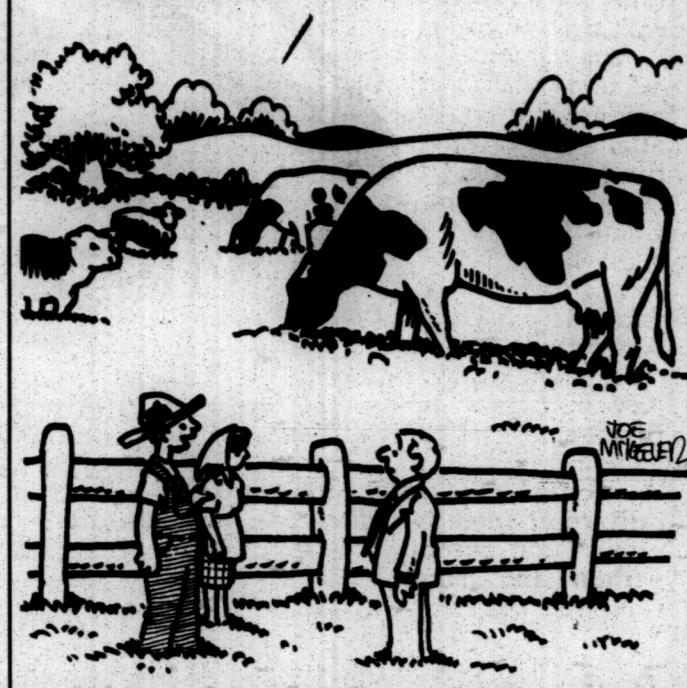
It is important that the people charged with carrying out this restructuring be accountable for their assurances to Southern Baptists in the pews that the savings they foresee in this restructuring will be spent on missions.

A figure of \$41 million in savings over a five-year period has been kicked around, but firm documentation of that estimate is hard to come by because the costs of the restructuring itself haven't been established.

Only a formal audit procedure can track the \$41 million over the five-year period and determine whether the savings are funnelled into missions.

A proactive, independent audit would certainly not call into question the reputations of the restructuring, and could only bolster their integrity in an age where people are naturally cynical about the pro-

"YOU WERE RIGHT, PASTOR — THE HEALTHIER THEY ARE, THE MORE THEY GIVE!"



nouncements of their leaders.

"Tell the truth and trust the people" is the healthy axiom by which Southern Baptists have governed themselves from the beginning.

If Southern Baptists are to continue giving in record amounts under the assumption that more money will be now available for missions work, a five-year independent audit of this restructuring process will provide the necessary bulwark.

Audit or not, we should never lose sight of the fact that Christians answer to a higher authority, the highest authority, for how we conduct the Master's business — and he already knows the numbers.

## A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE:



### Giving marriage a second chance

By Carl M. White, Associate Editor

Going through my clippings file I ran across a most incredible article from a 1995 issue of *Newsweek*. There is a regular column called "My Turn," written by a guest writer who could be just about anyone. It is frequently thought provoking, occasionally controversial, but almost always informative.

This particular column was written by an 8th grade Spanish teacher from North Carolina named Maggie McKinney. The subject of her article was, as they say, unique. I have never read an article like it before or since.

After 20 years of marriage, Maggie and her unnamed husband divorced. At the time Maggie received many encouraging calls and notes from friends. "Go for it." "You can do it." "You'll marry again, and this time it will last." "You're better off single." These are a sampling of the supportive comments she received.

Maggie admits that after the separation there was a powerful sense of newness to life. After a while the newness wore off, as it usually does in anything. What remained was the complex maze of a broken marriage — years of love and shared experiences that must

now be divided into two separate lives.

So, 18 months after the divorce was final, Maggie did something a bit unusual. She started dating her ex-husband. Shortly thereafter, they decided to give it another try.

This is when life took an unexpected twist. When she was getting the divorce, friends came forward with words of encouragement and support. Now that she was trying to make it work again she received a not too subtle message from those same friends. Why try and revive a failed relationship?

One caller said, "I heard you two are getting back together again. I hope . . . it isn't true."

Another said, "Are you sure you want to risk going through this again?"

Even her minister was not

supportive. "When something is dead," he said, "you need to bury it."

The one exception to this response was, Maggie observed in the article, her "religious right" friends. Apparently, they thought this was a great idea.

*Newsweek* uses this "My Turn" column for opinions that are often not found in the media. Maggie observes this herself, noting that you have never seen an Oprah show on "People who return to their former spouses."

There is also not a shelf at the local book store with books giving advice on how to make marriages work again after the separation. Nor do popular magazines have stories detailing the lives of people who split up and then come back together.

Maggie also makes another

interesting observation. People have been quick to criticize the flaws in the lives of Bill and Hillary Clinton. Where is the praise for the fact that, despite some serious but unspecified problems in their marriage, they found a way to remain as husband and wife?

We have become a society that knows all about divorce and how to justify it, but nothing about reconciliation, forgiveness, and trying again.

Why did Maggie return to her marriage? Was it because she couldn't sweep up 20 years of living and throw it away like yesterday's garbage? Was it because children, even grown ones, are better off with their parents still together? Was it because she once promised "for better or worse," and "till death do us part?"

It was all of these reasons plus one more. Maggie ends her "My Turn" column with these three sentences. "The minister wasn't wrong. At the time I talked to him the marriage was dead. But hasn't he heard of the resurrection?"

I have.

I hope you have, too.

Good luck Maggie. Today I said a prayer for you and all the others like you who are giving their marriage a second chance.

# Public outcry buries 'gender-accurate' NIV plans

Controversial plans to convert the most popular translation of the Bible to a "gender-accurate" text were put on hold May 14 following vocal opposition from Southern Baptists and other segments of the evangelical Christian community.

The New International Version (NIV) of the Bible will remain as it is — at least until after the year 2001, according to the International Bible Society (IBS) in Colorado Springs, Colo., the international copyright holder, and Zondervan Publishing House (ZPH) of Grand Rapids, Mich., the North American publisher.

The two groups estimate the NIV translation holds 45% of Bible sales in the Christian book industry.

"IBS and ZPH are unequivocally committed to continue to publish the current NIV text, without any changes or revisions. IBS and ZPH will contin-

ue to move forward with plans for the possible publication of an updated edition of the NIV... scheduled to be completed in the year 2001," the two organizations stated in a May 14 joint press release.

The NIV debate erupted after "World" magazine reported on March 29 that the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT), which provided the original NIV translation in 1978 and is responsible for updated revisions, planned to produce a "unisex" version that would eventually be the only version available in the U.S.

IBS vice-president Eugene Rubingh denounced the magazine article as "filled with innuendo and sensationalism, containing unconscionable slander," and suggested that "gender-accurate" was a more appropriate description of the CBT revision proposal.

Rubingh explained that the

intent of the revision was to translate the Bible's original languages to more accurately reflect references to both sexes that are currently translated only as "man."

The IBS/ZPH joint press release stated, "IBS and ZPH never have considered, nor will ever consider, any change in the NIV text that would use feminine pronouns to describe deity or deny the masculinity of Jesus."

"Nor would we approve any changes that would diminish or eliminate the divinely ordained uniqueness of men and women. No changes will be approved that are contrary to the original biblical text in any way."

A number of Christian organizations had previously called on IBS, ZPH, and CBT to drop the revision plans.

IBS and CBT officials met with Southern Baptist leaders

May 19 at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. News reports after the meeting indicated the Southern Baptist leaders expressed strong doubts about the proposed revision of the NIV text, which is used extensively in BSSB materials.

The IBS/ZPH joint press release promised close scrutiny of NIV revisions.

"The rigorous review process will include consultation with biblical scholars, theologians, and church leaders representing the evangelical tradition and will be subject to final approval by the board of directors of IBS."



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

# Record

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## Mississippians evacuated during coup

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (BP) — Mississippi missionaries Felix and Dene Greer were evacuated May 30 from the west African nation of Sierra Leone after a coup against the democratically-elected government turned deadly with street fighting and random use of powerful military weapons.

The Greers, who were forced to evacuate for the fourth time in their missionary careers, were safe in neighboring Conakry, Guinea, according to reports from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

Two rockets exploded just feet from the walls of the compound where Southern Baptist missionaries reside in this capital city.

A stray bullet pierced a lamp shade and lodged in a bedroom wall as missionaries Ron and Sharon Hill of Albuquerque, N.M., another Southern Baptist missionary couple, prepared to be evacuated by U.S. Marines on the morning of May 30.

The Greers have been teaching temporarily at Jui until they could return to Liberia, probably in December.

Last spring, they fled Liberia in a daring evacuation with U.S. Embassy officers as that country's coalition government splintered.

The Hills were jolted awake about 6 a.m. May 25 by the chatter of machine guns and blasts from heavy artillery as conspirators launched the coup in the capital city.

Nigerian troops loyal to Sierra Leone's first democratically elected president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, withdrew to about 12 miles outside the city after military leaders staging the coup drove out President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on May 25.

It was unclear whether Nigerian gunboats that arrived May 28 intended to retaliate against the coup.

"People are tense as to what will transpire between Nigerian troops and the new military dictator's troops," Hill said.

It appeared a showdown was imminent, as non-uniformed men streamed into

Freetown from the countryside asking for directions to military barracks.

Sierra Leone's most recent coup — the nation's third in five years — began May 25 when soldiers raided a Freetown prison and released former conspirators and others.

Looting, arson, and fierce fighting followed. Soldiers seized the legislature, torched the national treasury building, and drove Kabbah and other government leaders out of the country.

Johnny Paul Koroma, identified as the coup leader, had been jailed with eight co-defendants last September. They were accused of conspiring to overthrow President Kabbah, whose democratic election in February 1996 had ended five years of military rule in Sierra Leone.

Koroma said on May 26 he seized power because Kabbah's government had failed to keep agreements negotiated with rebels last November to end five years of civil war.

He announced by radio he would share power with the leader of the rebels who launched the civil war and said the military regretted the looting and was working to prevent further violence in the country.

The U.S. Embassy said it had no plans to evacuate its staff, and had previously suggested missionaries stay indoors and wait for further developments.

The Hills were taking people into the Foreign Mission Board compound where they were living — which includes housing for three missionary units, two of which are unassigned.

At one point, troops entered the com-

pound and sought to steal two vehicles, but a soldier carrying a pocket New Testament persuaded his colleagues not to; instead, they commandeered two vehicles next door.

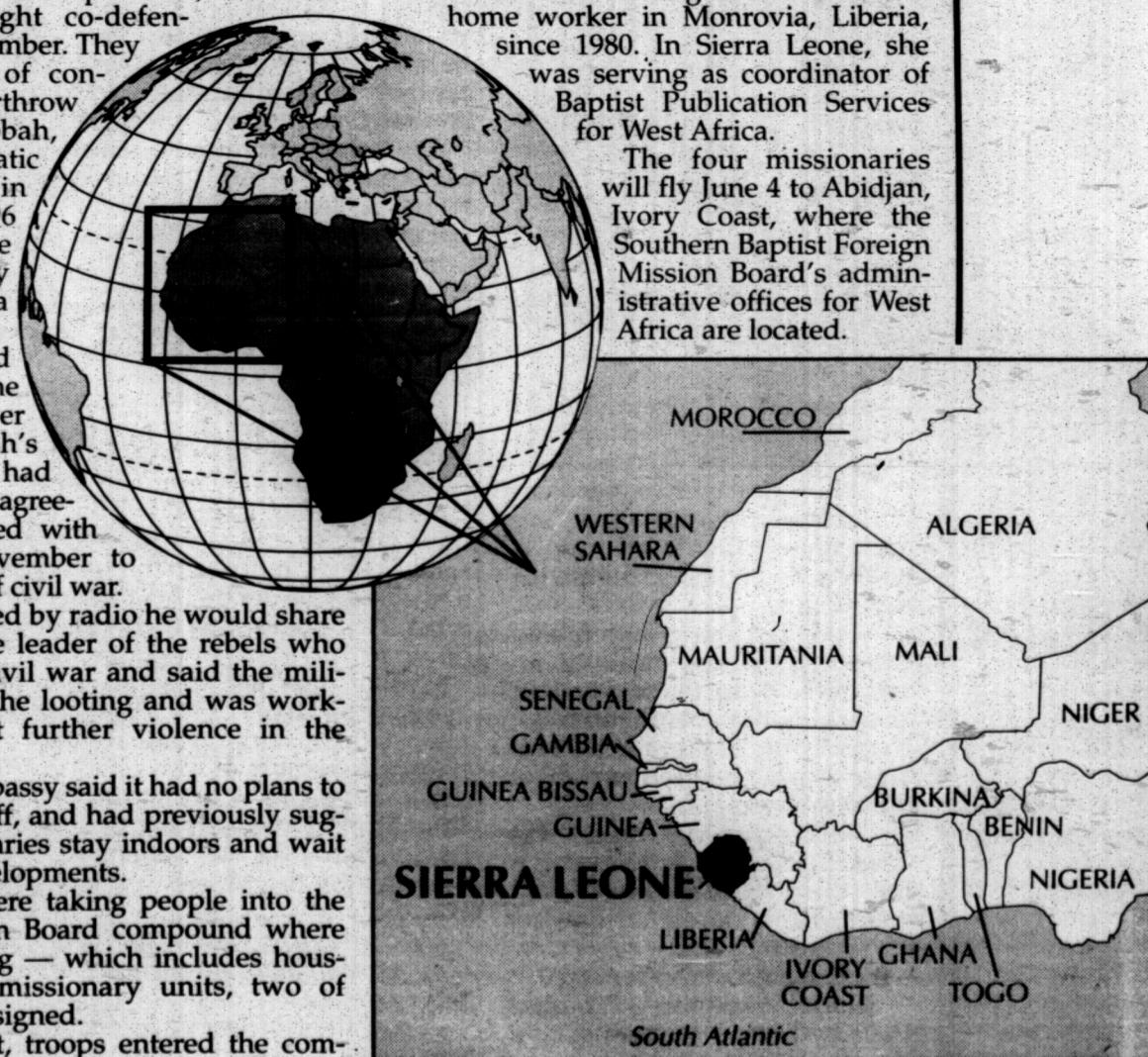
Felix V. Greer Jr., 50, received a bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College in Clinton, and master of theology and doctor of ministry degrees from New Orleans Seminary.

Greer served as pastor of First Church, Vancleave, prior to his missionary appointment in 1980.

Dene Brummett Greer, 48, was born in Jackson and received a bachelor of science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

She had been serving as a church and home worker in Monrovia, Liberia, since 1980. In Sierra Leone, she was serving as coordinator of Baptist Publication Services for West Africa.

The four missionaries will fly June 4 to Abidjan, Ivory Coast, where the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's administrative offices for West Africa are located.



## The Road to Everlasting Life



God intends for all his children live with him forever, but the road to everlasting life is blocked. To find that road you must:

**Admit that you are a sinner.**  
There is none righteous, not even one. (Rom. 3:10)

**Accept God's love for you.**  
God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom. 5:8)

**Acknowledge Christ as Lord.**  
If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Mississippi Baptist Church for spiritual guidance.

## BR deadlines

News items: one calendar week prior to requested publication date.

Advertising: two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date.

# Trustee nominees question NAMB decisions

DALLAS (ABP) — When the trustees of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) officially convene for the first time June 19, they will launch something new, but something they have not created.

That's a source of tension for some of the 80 trustees, each of whom has served as a trustee of one of the three agencies dissolved to form NAMB.

While generally supportive of the plans laid out for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) newest mission board, some trustees express concerns about decisions already made that they may not be able to change easily.

The most frequently listed concerns include the pay scale for NAMB employees, which some trustees believe is excessive, and the structure of the new board's trustee committees, which some believe consolidates too much power in too few hands.

During the last two years, messengers to Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings have approved creation of NAMB as part of a massive restructuring of denominational agencies and institutions.

However, details of creating NAMB have been left to a 10-member group known as the Implementation Task Force (ITF).

That group was not appointed by the convention but by the SBC Executive Committee.

It is accountable only to the Executive Committee, and it has held all of its meetings behind closed doors.

The implementation task force has held two advisory meetings in recent months with the potential NAMB trustees, who are to be elected by messengers to this year's convention in Dallas.

"We don't have any power yet because we haven't been elected by the convention," explained potential trustee Mark Bond, pastor of First Church of La Center, Ky. "We have no more power than anyone else. The power has all been given to ITF."

This creates an awkward situation, according to Bond and other potential trustees.

For example, the ITF force and a related ad hoc group called the incorporators have drafted a pay scale and have begun offering positions with specific salaries to potential employees.

That bothers potential trustee Billy Bissell of Muskogee, Okla., and others. Bissell says the proposed pay scale is too high, yet he fears it's too late to undo what's already been done.

The proposed pay scale — obtained from another potential trustee — lists salary ranges for

every position, although information has not been given to trustees about where employees will fall within the ranges.

Robert Reccord, the nominee for NAMB president, will be paid from \$140,000 to \$210,000 annually.

Each of five vice presidents, who have not yet been named, will be paid from \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually. Directors of the next units downline will be paid from \$75,000 to \$98,000 annually.

That explanation is not enough to satisfy Bissell, who is among a handful of trustees who already have expressed concern about the pay scale.

Bissell said the NAMB pay scale is too high in comparison to salaries at other SBC agencies.

The proposed pay scale shows about a 35% increase over the HMB's current pay scale, said Bissell, who has been a Home Mission Board trustee for six years.

"I think this is going to cause some questions among churches, especially among pastors, about how much of a savings we really have [from restructuring] and how much of this is going to missions and how much is going to administration," he said.

"I think there's going to be a perception problem as to how effectively we can call on vol-

unteers and regular missionaries to sacrificial service with the appearance that the salaries at the board have increased significantly."

Hogue said he believes NAMB must be willing to pay good salaries to attract good employees. "If you get quality leadership, you're going to have to pay for them."

Accusations that the proposed pay scale is outlandish are not true, Hogue said. "Whenever you look at what pastors are making in good-sized churches, this [accusation] is not fair at all."

A 1996 study of ministerial pay across 13 state or regional Baptist conventions recorded the average pastor's pay (salary and housing allowance) at \$33,125. The average pay for pastors of churches with 1,000 or more members was \$76,682.

The highest salary reported for a pastor in the 13-state survey was \$133,050.

Bond, the Kentucky trustee, said he isn't concerned about the salary scale or the executive committee structure so much as other things he fears may be lost in the transition. But overall, he's optimistic.

Now he is excited about the future, Bond said.

"I believe it's going to prove to be a blessing."

## First, Okolona organizes widow/divorcee group

The charter Miss. chapter of "God's Windows," a national ministry to widowed and divorced women, has been organized at First Church, Okolona.

Sue Millender, a member of First Church, Okolona, and Miss. chapter coordinator said, "Through this program I can share with so many others about different types of grief. God has given me an opportunity to tell other widows that it is marvelous, what God's love can do to help them find new direction needed in their lives.

"After nearly two years of withdrawal, I still have my dark times but I know God is holding me with his righteous right hand."

Millender, along with fellow church members Billie Bean and Billie Jean Cole, felt God leading them to begin the Miss. chapter in September 1996, after they attended a God's Windows retreat.

The chapter meets at First Church, Okolona, at 2 p.m. on the third Saturday of each month, and women from six surrounding cities are now members, Millender reported.

Sharon Sandhop of Grand Prairie, Texas, founded God's Windows when she became

widowed after 21 years of marriage. The ministry has spread worldwide, according to information supplied to "The Baptist Record" by First Church, Okolona.

For more information, contact Millender at 520 W. Monroe Ave., Okolona, MS 38860; or Sandhop at P.O. Box 541033, Grand Prairie, TX 75054.

## RTVC programs invite calls

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—In the first four months of 1997, the SBC's Radio and Television Commission (RTVC) counseling department has responded to 8,417 inquiries generated by RTVC radio/television programs and Internet presence.

Counselors have corresponded to 785 inquiries on the World Wide Web, 639 from the weekly television program "Invitation to Life," 442 from the daily television program "Cope" and 328 from the weekly radio and television versions of "The Baptist Hour," hosted by First Church, Jackson pastor Frank Pollard.

Spiritual decisions for the first four months include salvation, 156; salvation inquiry, 69; and rededication, 105. Spiritual issues include assurance of salvation, 79; Christian growth, 799; and other (prayer, praise, information, etc.), 3,843.

## Pulley urges seniors to keep serving Lord

Senior adults need to realize that the Lord is not through with their lives yet, said John Pulley, minister of senior adults and pastoral care at Broadmoor Church in Jackson.

"They (senior adults) still have a lot to offer to their families and especially to society," Pulley said. "They can do such things as pass their faith and values on to the next generation. Imagine what a difference this could make on the youth of today."

Pulley teaches this in a study entitled "Legacy of Love," which is being led this summer at three senior adult retreats at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly at Pass Christian. The retreats are expected to reach about 700 senior adults from around Mississippi this summer.

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly is owned and operated by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

According to Pulley, the commitment study was written and introduced after he lost his father-in-law.

"My father-in-law impacted my life in a huge way and I realized through his love how senior

adults of today could have the same opportunity to be role models for others," said Pulley.

The commitment cards are signed by senior adults and given to their children and their church in order to have accountability.

Pulley makes three general points for senior adults to note if they are serious about signing and maintaining the "Legacy of Love" commitment.

◆ God is taking care of you and will continue to do so in the future. "No matter how old you get, always realize that the Lord is still with you."

◆ Look back at all the troubles and trials faced over the years. "For example, this could be the separation a couple may have experienced through a time of war."

◆ Share with others how God pulled you through it all. "Give others your testimony on how God gave you an inner peace even through the hard times."

For more information on the "Legacy of Love" commitment, contact John Pulley at Broadmoor Church, Jackson at (601) 366-8444, ext. 124.

# Soup labels serve up van for missionary

By Jill Lovett  
*The Alabama Baptist*

TAHOE CITY, Calif. (BP)—"It's not just a van. It's a vehicle for proclaiming God's Word," said Debbie Wohler of the van she has earned by collecting 1,095,000 Campbell's Soup labels and other Campbell's product labels.

She recently wrote "The Baptist Record" to thank the Mississippi Baptists who helped collect labels for the van.

The quest for the new van began two and a half years ago when Wohler, a Southern Baptist home missionary, pursued the Campbell's Labels for Education program to earn a replacement for her worn-out, 15-passenger van.

Wohler's 1982 van had been used to transport children four times a day to First Church in Tahoe City, Calif., for after-school ministries.

The Campbell's education program, originally intended for school programs, recently was extended to after-school ministries as well.

Individuals or groups can collect a specified number of labels to earn various resources.

The 15-passenger van is one of the largest resources offered, but Campbell's also supplies a minivan for 874,000 labels, a child identification kit for 31,480 labels, or poster die-cuts for 390 labels, among other things.

Wohler, who has worked in Tahoe City 18 years, said Campbell's confirmed at the end of April that her new van would be delivered between Oct. 1 and Nov. 30.

"I believed that God would provide, but I thought it would take closer to five years," she said.

Wohler enlisted nationwide help in collecting Campbell's labels through word of mouth and promotion in state Baptist newspapers and "Missions Mosaic," a magazine for women published by Woman's Missionary Union.

Labels were received from about 1,700 churches and individuals. Bea Taylor, a member at First Church, Andalusia, Ala., has led the effort to collect

labels at her church. A former California resident, she realized what an opportunity Wohler has to minister to the people at Lake Tahoe.

Taylor wanted to send the labels so Wohler would know people in Andalusia were praying for her. "We believed she could do it," Taylor said.

With the assistance and prayers of many others, Wohler has done it.

She's not just stopping with 1,095,000 labels. Wohler has already collected 136,000 labels toward the second van she plans to obtain for the ministry at Lake Tahoe.

A Mississippi woman wrote saying throughout last fall she was collecting soup labels.

The woman's husband repeatedly asked why she was saving the labels, but she couldn't tell him because she didn't know.

She simply felt led to do so, she pointed out.

Upon reading an article about Wohler, the woman knew exactly for whom the soup labels were intended and got in touch with Wohler.

Another woman from South Carolina sent Wohler 33,534 labels from the Woman's Missionary Union group at her church.

Wohler said such stories show how God can orchestrate his plans so well.

"I honestly think people like being a part of something good."

"I'm hoping it will help people see what God can do with them, and that what they do makes a difference," Wohler said.

For more information about the ongoing second van campaign and the Tahoe-area ministry, write Wohler at P.O. Box 7452, Tahoe City, CA 96145-7452.

## Mississippians receive SWBTS degrees May 17

Four Mississippians were among the 361 students awarded degrees from Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, during commencement exercises May 17.

Receiving master degrees were John Arthur Thomas, Tutwiler, master of divinity; Charles Michael Beazley, Terry, master of arts in religious education; and B. Tate Cockrell, Laurel, master of arts in marriage/family counseling and religious education.

Brenda L. Cargile, daughter of David and Linda Duggar of Seminary, received the diploma in theology degree.

## Moody exhorts BSSB to 'pass baton' to children

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Describing the Baptist Sunday School Board as "the largest, and, in my opinion, the best Bible-teaching agency on the face of the earth," Jess Moody challenged employees to "hand a well-carried baton to the reaching fingers of our children and our children's children."

In a message during the celebration of the board's 106th anniversary, Moody, a retired pastor and well-known speaker and writer now living in Mansfield, Texas, cited the important role of the board in helping Christians grow in their faith.

"Eight million people use your Bible study presentations every week. Yours are the best because you are the servant of all, attempting to make Christians launch out into the great waters instead of being about as deep as a parking lot puddle," he said.

Quoting the poem, "High Flight," by John Gillespie Magee Jr., Moody said, "I can truthfully attest that when I have dedicated my life to Christ Jesus, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth and my soul has danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings. ... And by Christ's saving grace, I have reached out and touched the face of God."

To ensure future generations know Jesus Christ as their Savior, he said the baton must be "handed well to the youth."

Moody presented to BSSB President James T. Draper Jr. two official Olympic batons — "one for us and one for tomorrow."

"And there they are dead ahead of us," Moody said. "The young are waiting to see what

we will do about all this. I can see them now."

"I see the youth of the 21st century," he said. "They are set, ready to run, looking back at us, their hand reaching back for us to stretch and hand the baton we've been carrying."



PASSING OFF — Jess Moody challenged employees of the Baptist Sunday School Board May 23 to pass the baton of faith to future generations. Moody, a retired pastor, writer, and speaker living in Mansfield, Texas, spoke at the service celebrating the 106th anniversary of the BSSB. (Photo by Jim Veneman)

"In the name of the Christ of God, let us hand a well-carried baton to the reaching fingers of our children and our children's children so they may begin the great run down the chalkline lane, reaching out to the 22nd and 23rd and 24th centuries," he continued.

In response, Draper said, "When we get tired, when it gets tough for us, we have the Holy Spirit within us — a reminder that we've been passed the baton and we must move forward to pass it on. That's been our history. I pray it will be our legacy."

"The only debt we owe to the past is to leave the future indebted to us," Draper concluded.



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*How can I get my emotionally-distant husband to be there for me? I get so depressed that I'm prone to sin, and that scares me.*

Emotional distance is usually caused by fear or ignorance. He may be afraid of vulnerability, or he may not know what to do. If he had poor role models when he was younger, that can contribute to the problem. There may be traumatic reasons such as abuse, abandonment, shame, or rejection. Study his life situation to isolate the reasons he acts as he does, and then pray God will lift those burdens from him while you encourage him to become more involved in your life. You can't force your husband to change his ways; he has to be personally convicted to do it himself. You can lead him to the proverbial water but you can't make him drink. However, you can make the water so enticing that he will be tempted to take a first sip. Prayer is a powerful weapon in the Christian's arsenal, so pray that God will change his heart and also help you understand what you need to do to help bring this about. Your frustration and hurt are making you prone to sin, even though you know it is wrong. Committing those sins won't

even up the score with your husband; it will only affect your attitude toward yourself and your marriage. Focus your energy on serving the Lord. Voice your hurt and anger to God. Cast your fears and burdens on him, and he will give you comfort.

*We have no marriage, outside my husband's needs. How can I get through to him that I have needs, too?*

You must communicate this fact to him in a Christian way. You may not want to open up to him because of the hurt his self-centeredness has brought on, but how else will he know unless you talk with him? If this is not possible, utilize Phil. 4:6-7 in your prayer life. Do an honest appraisal of the relationship to uncover when it began to change for the worse, and what factors contributed to the change. Take action to alter those factors where you can. As in the above letter, you can't make him drink the water. Encourage him when he does good, but don't add a critique or advice on how he should do it next time. Talk with him, talk with God, and don't be tempted by sin. Remember that your Christian conduct always pleases the Lord.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS



**Mac Alford**, a student at Mississippi College and a native of Liberty, participated in the Undergraduate Research Poster Session on Capitol Hill. Additionally, he was awarded the nationally prestigious James B. Duke Fellowship and scholarships amounting to \$34,020 per year to Duke University for graduate study in the area of Botany. Alford is a recipient of the Certificate of Special Achievement of 1997 from the Botanical Society of America. He was also awarded the Bailey Biology Award and the Perry Award during the annual Honors Day ceremonies. Alford is pictured with Senator Thad Cochran during the research session in Washington.

**William Carey College** will host summer workshops, June 16-20 and July 14-18, at Pecan Shadows Farm. The workshop,

11, is a workshop designed to teach high school and college mathematics teachers how to use graphing calculators to enhance

Aerospace Education, will be offered by the School of Education and Psychology and taught by William Hetrick. Classes will meet Mon.-Fri., from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, call (601) 582-6195 or 796-5507.

**William Carey College** will present two graphing calculator workshops. Algebra with Technology, July 7-

algebra instruction. Higher Math with Technology, July 14-18, is an advance workshop designed to develop skills learned in Algebra with Technology. For more information, contact Charlotte McShea at (601) 582-6172 or 582-6139.

The Department of Biological Sciences at Mississippi College (MC) has selected five students to receive summer fellowships. The fellowships are possible through a grant received by MC from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Students awarded fellowships were Amy Marie Donhardt, Collierville, Tenn.; Wendy Ann Mayer, Mobile,

Ala.; Alpa Goel, Clinton; Whitney Elizabeth Pennington, Brandon; and Amanda Kay Lee, Mendenhall.

**Schoelhouse Rock Live!**, a musical comedy based upon the television series and which opens on June 12 at William Carey College, is the first production of Carey Dinner Theatre's twenty-third season. The production will be presented nightly except Sundays and Mondays, June 12-28. Dinner is served at 7 p.m. in the O. L. Quave Theatre, with the performance following. The box office is open from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. daily except Sunday, and seats may be reserved by calling (601) 582-6221. The admission price of \$17.50 includes dinner and the show.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD

**The Watchmen Quartet** will be in concert at Byram Church, Jackson, June 29, 6 p.m. A fellowship will be held in Family Life Center following the concert. Roy Maine is pastor.

**Pass Road Church, Gulfport**, will host Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames, a

dramatic presentation of real life experiences. The dates and times are June 15, 6:30 p.m. and June 16 and 17 at 7 p.m. This ministry features a cast of 50 members of the church. Tickets are free and available by calling the church at (601) 863-1697. Edgar Jackson is pastor.



**First Church, Aberdeen**, recently celebrated its 160th anniversary with a homecoming and a \$260,000 note burning celebration on a \$760,000 Family Life Center which includes a gym, game room, and Sunday School classes. Pictured (from left) are Roger Wright; Gary Andrews; Jimmy Summers; Martha Kelly; Paul Matthews, pastor; Dale Bowen; Ellis Harris; Mary Cook; and Pam Tisdale; Alan Kilgore, former pastor, not pictured.

**Avalon**, a contemporary Christian group, will be in concert at First Church, Yazoo City, June 8 at 5 p.m. Included in the group is Michael Passons of Yazoo City and a graduate of Mississippi College. For more information, call (601) 746-2471.

**Springfield Church, Morton**, will celebrate its 125th anniversary on June 15. Activities include a praise service, special music beginning at

10 a.m., dinner on the grounds at noon, and afternoon service with special music and testimonies. The morning message will be brought by Don Wilson, interim pastor. The theme for the day is "Great is Thy Faithfulness."

Are your seniors tired of crawling over the HUMP? The solution is a 15-passenger van with an aisle, raised roof & electric step. Call Tri-State Van & Bus Today! 1-800-330-3622 BUSES! VANS! PEOPLE MOVERS!



**Shiloh Church, Oxford**, held ground breaking services on April 20 for a Christian Life Center at a cost of \$250,000. Pictured are Gayle Allen, Donnie Holmes, Kent Littlejohn, Art Freeman, Johnny Parker, Wayne Sparks, Jim Hankins, Steve Quarles, C. W. White, building committee; Robert Gardner, Floyd Gardner, Roy Phillips, Gerald Brown, Bobbie Gardner, Donald White, deacons; Ronnie Mayes, interim pastor; and Don Stanfill, director of missions for Lafayette Association.

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What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# House Tops.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

June 5, 1997

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## REBECCA GRACE WINS YOUTH SPEAKER'S TOURNAMENT WITH "STRAIGHT TALK"

Reprinted below is the winning speech made by Rebecca Grace in the Youth Speaker's Tournament held recently. The tournament was sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Rebecca, a twelfth-grader, attends First Baptist Church in New Albany, which is a member of the Union County Baptist Association. She entitled her speech "Straight Talk" which deals with the issue of prayer in schools. She won a four-year room and board scholarship to Mississippi College.

Congratulations are to be extended to Rebecca on her outstanding achievement along with best wishes for her future plans.

### STRAIGHT TALK

"Our Father Who Art in Heaven,"... I'm sorry this line has been disconnected. Since the Supreme Court ruling of 1962 that first took

prayer out of the school, our nation has taken a turn for the worse. If there was ever a time that America needed to have a straight talk with God, that time is now! With the increase of school violence, the rapid spread of AIDS, the international conflicts, gang violence, and a steady rise of teen pregnancy, we must reconnect the prayer lines in our school. Why are we trying to eliminate God by limiting his presence in the classrooms? He belongs there!

Rebecca Grace

He needs to be there! "Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." It is first the parents' responsibility to do this, then it falls in the teachers' hands. A child spends the majority of her day at school and needs this exposure. A lot of us learned The Lord's Prayer at school and when I was young my day at school began with: "My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty..." Liberty! What is liberty? Liberty is defined as the condition of being free from restriction; also known as freedom. The United States has always been known for its freedoms and it continues to be, or does it? Do you as citizens honor your country? Do you respect your country? Do you love your country and its freedoms? "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all." This is what many may still hear if they were to step into the classrooms, especially elementary classrooms, around our country of America. I just stated that I pledged my allegiance to a nation that is under God with liberty. Many students around the country do that every morning to start off their day and they do it in public schools. It's been done for as long as I can remember and no one has been terribly offended by it and if they were, all they did was excuse themselves from the room until the pledge was completed. Why can't it be this way with school prayer? If we are one nation under God, then shouldn't we be allowed to pray to God?

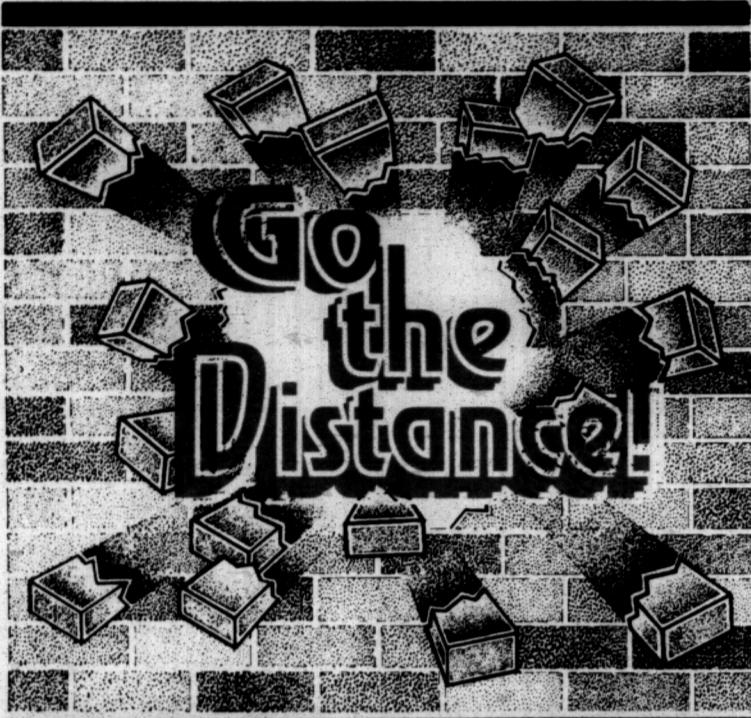
Well, according to the First Amendment of the Constitution the right is granted to us. It states that "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This means that the government cannot interfere in the affairs of religion, therefore they shouldn't decide to do away with school prayer. However, it is granted that the government can amend the Constitution if a part of it is considered as unconstitutional. But how can prayer be unconstitutional when it was a part of our forefathers' primary purpose when creating a plan of government for this country?

This is certainly not the first time that the issue of school prayer has been brought up. In 1962 there was a landmark case known as Engel v. Vitale. This case was about the daily recitation of a nondenominational school prayer in New York public schools. This was ruled as unconstitutional because it was said to be in conflict with the neutral religion of public schools. It was also stated that all religions cannot be satisfied by one single prayer. I as a Christian feel two different ways about this ruling. First of all, religion is not the issue when dealing with prayer. It is your relationship with God that is important, therefore you should be allowed to pray what you feel and not just recite a written prayer without meaning. On the other hand, when this action was ruled as unconstitutional it took God out of the school. There have been other cases which have gone on to outlaw Bible reading and the reciting of the Lord's Prayer. Once again, God was completely taken out of the schools and that was never intended.

History has gone to prove that when God was taken out of schools, morals have deteriorated, education has deteriorated, causing test scores to go down. America is now ranked 14th when it comes to this. And it's strange that basketball games, football games, the local Board of Aldermen, even the House and the Senate begin with prayer, yet when it is brought into the educational environment it is considered as hypocritical. This is because some people think that God doesn't play a part in their lives. But in reality, God plays a part in everybody's life. It says in Romans 14:11 "Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." That is not just if you're a Christian or if you go to a Baptist Church, Methodist Church, or a Pentecostal Church. It is for everybody.

Unless these rulings are stopped, prayer could be completely outlawed everywhere! If they aren't stopped, then in the future imagine going to a restaurant to have dinner with your family and you bow your heads to say the blessing before you eat. The manager walks over to you and tells you that you can't do this because you are offending the others around you. How much further do you want this injustice to go? I hope no further. I urge you to take action and put God back into the schools through prayer.

I also ask you all as citizens of the United States who honor, respect and love your country and its freedoms to be 100% in favor of prayer by anyone who wants to show their honor, respect and love for God. These people have had the liberty to show their feelings to God and call on him at any time. Today he is still there and his line is never busy, just disconnected!



**S**uper Summer Mississippi is for the young person who is a mature and responsible Christian leader. Mississippi College is the host for Super Summer, July 21-25. Young people attending Super Summer Mississippi spend approximately 20 hours in evangelism and discipleship training. Quality youth leaders from our state lead our youth in study. Youth are trained in how to share their faith, how to have a quiet time, how to memorize scripture, how to find God's will for their lives, and more. They are also challenged and equipped to utilize their talents to penetrate their culture for Christ in creative and effective ways. Throughout Super Summer young people are encouraged to use the freedom they have in Christ to change the world.

#### Request For Registration Packet

**REGISTRATION BEGINS APRIL 15 AND ENDS JUNE 30** - All applications received after June 30 will be subject to a \$25 late fee. Applications received after July 7 may be refused. Space is limited.

### Super Summer '97

with Mike Curry

**July 21-25**

Mississippi College, Clinton

#### Financial Requirements

The total cost for Super Summer during the registration period is \$140 per student and adult; amount includes food, housing in the school dormitory, materials, and T-shirt.

#### Guidelines for all SS candidates

1. Demonstrates leadership qualities and is a growing Christian.
2. Faithful involvement in Worship, Sunday School, and Wednesday night youth activities.
3. Complete at least one level of a discipleship study (i.e. Survival Kit, DiscipleYouth, DiscipleNow...).
4. Memorized a minimum of 10 scripture verses relating to discipleship, evangelism, or a disciple study.
5. Share their personal testimony with the youth group.
6. Share the Gospel with at least one person this year.
7. Completed at least the 8th grade in 1997, but not yet in college.
8. Agree to attend all SS sessions.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Church \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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Return this form to:

**Discipleship & Family Ministry Dept., MBCB**  
 P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

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Each weekend has a separate emphasis. The first deals with Missions and Ministry. The second focuses on Bible Study. The third concentrates on Discipleship and Family Ministry. Don't miss this excellent opportunity for your organizational leaders to receive instruction in the latest training methods and materials. Please encourage attendance at one, two, or all three conferences.

# Discipling the Family

Featuring the Richardson families leading in worship:

- Rev. Jay Richardson, FBC, Greenville
- Rev. Gary Richardson, FBC, West Point
- Rev Ian Richardson, Lake City, Fla.
- Dr. and Mrs. James Richardson, Madison

#### Family Conferences:

- "TeamKID" - Preschoolers/Children
- Mini-Centrifuge - Mickey Little, NOBTS, Ronney Jo Webb, Laurel
- Couples - Jay Richardson
- Men's Ministry - Gary Richardson
- Single Parenting/Women's Ministry - led by Pam Bell, Bogalusa, La.
- Power of Prayer - James Richardson

#### FAMILY ENRICHMENT WEEK

**JULY 1-5, 1997**

**GULFSHORE BAPTIST ASSEMBLY**

#### Family Perspectives

- Family Feud
- Unbound drama team from Hattiesburg
- Magic from the Battle family, Brandon
- Morning Watch
- Barbecue Supper
- Whole "free" day
- Ice cream and watermelon fellowships

**Registration: 1:30 p.m. (Tuesday, July 1)**

**Departure: 10 a.m. (Saturday, July 5)**

## Fall Festival of Marriage

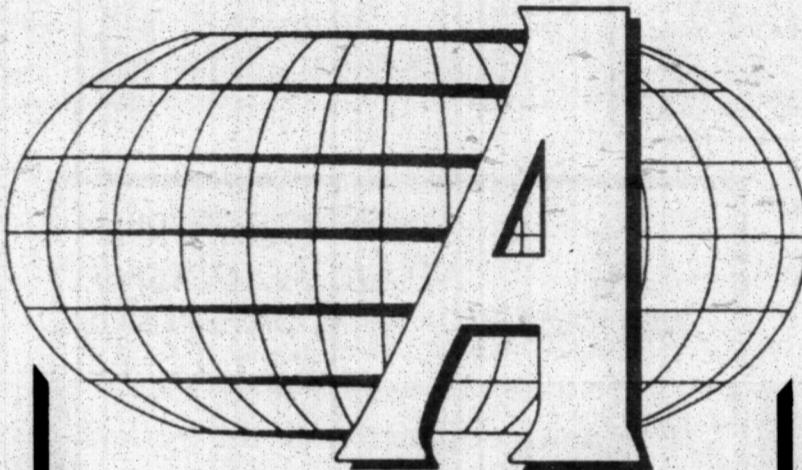
September 19-21, 1997

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Jackson  
(formerly Harvey Hotel)  
601/969-5100  
\$59 per night

Registration fee: \$90 per couple  
Deposit: \$50 per couple  
Walk in: \$110 per couple

Keynoters: Bob and Yvonne Turnbull  
Music and Drama: Jeff and Debby McElroy  
Call 1-800-254-2022

Sponsored by the Department of  
Discipleship and Family Ministry, MBCB



### ACTEEN'S WEEKEND

JULY 25-27

**COST: \$50 PER PERSON**

Begins Friday at 3 p.m. and  
ends Sunday at noon,  
and also includes  
attending Youth Night  
at Mississippi Coliseum.

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

#### Amount Enclosed:

\$50 x # of persons \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total

Please attach a list of Acteens  
and leaders attending.

Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist  
Convention Board

Send to: WMU-Acteens Weekend  
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

  
**Mark your  
calendars! You don't  
want to forget any of these  
exciting WMU events!**

• July 28-31

Church and Associational Leadership  
Training, Camp Garaywa  
9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. on Tue/Wed/Thur and  
6:30-9 p.m. on Mon/Tue/Thur

• Sept. 5-6

Church and Associational Leadership  
Training, Camp Garaywa  
5 p.m. Friday-12:30 p.m. Saturday

• Sept. 6

Ground-breaking ceremony for Garaywa  
Lodge, 11 a.m.

• Oct. 10-11

Women On Mission Retreat, Camp Lake  
Stephens at Oxford  
4 p.m. Friday-Noon Saturday

**Call the WMU office for more information at  
1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 in the Jackson area.**

### God's Mission of Love!

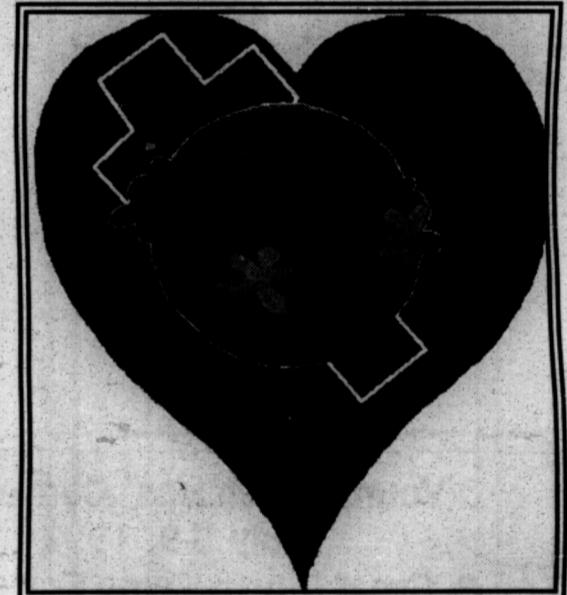
#### GA Mother/Daughter Overnight Camp Garaywa

**Cost: \$23 per person**

Begins Friday at 5 p.m. and  
ends Saturday at noon

#### Circle your choice of dates:

**June 20-21      July 18-19  
(grades 1-2)      (grades 1-6)**



Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

Association \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount enclosed: \$23 x # of persons \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ total**

Make checks payable to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Send to: WMU-GA Mother/Daughter Overnight  
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530

## Pray this day for...

**Prayer Ministry Office** • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine **1-800-787-PRAY**

### What Prayer Is

"Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

"To pray is to let Jesus come into our hearts. ... All He needs is access. ... God has designed prayer as a means of intimate and joyous fellowship between God and man. ... To pray is to let Jesus into our needs."

"*Prayer*" by O. Hallesby

On April 30, missionaries Milton and Nanette Lites had a prayerwalk in their new neighborhood, Ciudad Salitre, Bogata, Columbia. They had contact with 'Asosalitre,' an association composed of representatives from each apartment complex that coordinates activities for residents of the area. Pray that this contact will open doors for ministry and for the sharing of the gospel.

**Fathers Day** – Pray that fathers will commit themselves to three daily assignments: 1. Spend quality time with their family. 2. Provide spiritual and moral leadership for their family. 3. Celebrate and cherish their children so they will realize how precious they are.

For GA Summer Camp; Camp Garaywa; 10 am, 9th-noon, 13th; sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union. Pray for an Egyptian pastor and his family in Alexandria, Egypt, who have been threatened. Pray for Baptist representatives Shaun and Amal Shorosh as they counsel with them about family and ministry concerns.

For Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, 16th-20th; Central Hills Retreat; sponsored by the Brotherhood Department. For GA Summer Camp; Camp Garaywa; 10 am, 16th-noon, 20th; sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union.

For Youth Conference III, Gulfshore Assembly; sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Give thanks to God for Karen Allred, a volunteer nurse from Auburn, Alabama, who served in Bolivia last month. She was able to work with missionaries, teaching health, nutrition and disease prevention.

For the Southern Baptist Convention, 17th-19th; Dallas, Texas. Pray that this annual convention will be the one that will challenge all Southern Baptist churches to cooperate and make a greater effort to reach the lost in the U.S. and around the world.

Praise God for the continued growth and maturity of El Rei Vieni (The King is Coming) Baptist Church in the Tel Aviv area. The men and women met in separate retreats on May 16-17.

Give thanks to God for a language teacher in Taiwan who has accepted Christ as her Savior. Pray for her husband who also wants to take this step of faith but is hesitant because of his parents who still worship idols. Pray for the parents to see how useless their idols are and also to see their need of the Living God.

In a few months, missionaries Ronny and Kathy Cooksey will move to Nagasaki to join veteran missionaries Pratt and Rita Dean, who have a little more than a year left before retirement. They ask you to pray that they would find a place to live in one of the many areas without a church, that their children would make the transition smoothly and that they can develop a deep friendship with another family in that new area.

For Youth Conference V, Gulfshore Assembly; sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Pray for two South Brazil missionaries, Karen Harbin and Alicia Braswell who are having some problems during their pregnancies. Alicia (Bill Sellers' daughter) who is due in July has been put to bed due to premature contractions.

For Youth Conference II, Gulfshore Assembly; sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Pray for the African nation of Burundi where hatred and violence seem always to be simmering. Recently, there was fighting between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes. Only prayer can stay the hand of the destroyer.

Pray for the salvation and calming of a neighbor who lives next to the Aldeota Baptist Church in Fortaleza, Brazil. This man becomes quite angry, calls the police and hinders choir rehearsals on Wednesday nights led by missionary Sheila Preidmore.

For Youth Conference IV, Gulfshore Assembly; sponsored by Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Give thanks to God for the young men who are being trained as leaders for the Baptist work in Swaziland.

13

14

# Great Music Conferences at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

**GULFSHORE  
MUSIC LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE  
JULY 10-12**

A conference designed with the leaders of your church's music program in mind. Come and learn new and unique ways of enlarging the music ministry where you serve.

Cost:  
"A" Unit - \$84.30  
"C" Unit - \$78  
Registration: 10 a.m.  
Orientation: 12:45 p.m.  
Handbell Auditions: 3 p.m.

**Young Musicians' Conference  
July 5-9, 1997  
A Great Music Camp For Children  
for only \$112.50**

for those who have finished grades 4-6

Plan to send your children this summer for an experience they will never forget.

The guest music director will be Linda Boyd, choir coordinator, FBC, Atlanta, and the camp pastor will be Jerry Glass, pastor of Dry Creek BC, Florence.

Be sure to register early!

**HeartSong '97**

June 27-July 1

**THE ULTIMATE MUSIC  
CELEBRATION FOR YOUTH  
7-12 Grade**

**Music: The Ultimate Youth  
Choir Book**

**The book and T-shirt is included  
in the conference fee, which is \$136.**



## CHINA INFO WRONG

Editor:

In the April 17 editorial, you made the statement that: "...Chinese pastors are being beaten by government authorities, forced to stand in chest-deep sewage for days, and routinely left for dead on roadsides — all for the unpardonable decision not to be part of the official government-run church in the communist country."

I wonder where you got this information. There is no official government-run church in China.

The China Christian Council

(CCC) represents the Christian churches in the government and constantly works to solve problems between local officials and the churches.

The persecution comes, not from the central government, but from local officials who are uneducated and not knowledgeable about government laws which give freedom of religion to the Chinese people.

The government does not give foreigners the right to go in and begin evangelizing and setting up churches.

The Chinese Christians do a marvelous job in both of these areas!

Here in Hefei, there are about thirty meeting places which are registered with the government and are saving money to buy land and build churches.

Yes, there is sometimes persecution, but this is becoming less and less because church groups registered with the government (and even some that are not) which are persecuted can receive help through the CCC.

Around July 1, I will be returning to Mississippi after 5 1/2 years as an Amity teacher working through East Asia China office.

It is impossible to tell of the

amazing work God is doing in China.

I thank God and Southern Baptists for allowing me to be a witness of these things.

Jean Moore  
Hefei, China

## GEORGIA BSU REUNION

Editor:

The Baptist Student Union (BSU) and the BSU Summer Mission Program of the state of Georgia will be having a very special reunion celebration on Aug. 9 at Rock Eagle 4-H Conference Center in Madison, Ga.

Former BSU'ers will gather to celebrate 75 years of BSU in Georgia and 50 years of BSU Summer Missions.

We are trying to contact former BSU'ers, former state BSU council members, former BSU summer missionaries, and former campus ministers who served in Georgia.

We ask that anyone interested in finding out more information about this special reunion contact the Department of Student Work at the Georgia Baptist Convention.

The phone number is (800) 746-4422 ext. 248 or (770) 455-0404 ext. 248.

The address is: Department of Student Work, 2930 Flowers Road South, Atlanta, GA 30341. Registration deadline is July 15.

Donna Blackburn, chair  
75/50 Celebration Committee  
Atlanta, Ga.

## VBS DATES

**First Church of Runnelstown, Petal:** June 9-13; 8-11 a.m. daily for nursery age through 6th grade; Linda Temple, director.

**New Hope, Foxworth:** June 9-13; 8:30-11:30 a.m.; June 7, parade, 10-11:30 a.m., parking lot at the church.

**Byram, Jackson:** June 14; 9:15 a.m.-noon, parade and pre-register; June 15-19, VBS, 6:30-9 p.m.; June 20, family night, 6:30 p.m.; Roy Maine, pastor.

**Dallas Prayer Walk**  
June 12-13

**Crossover Dallas**  
June 14

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.*

*Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.*

*Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)*

*Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.*

*Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.*

*No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.*

*When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.*

# Staying Well Informed

## Loving Relationships for a Lifetime

Our relationships are among our most important treasures, yet they're often the part of our lives we most take for granted. Good relationships with others can help us weather life's toughest storms, and bad relationships can make us miserable. To explore the importance of healthy relationships, Mississippi Baptist Health Systems will host a family conference entitled, *Loving Relationships for a Lifetime*, featuring Dr. John Trent, on Saturday, June 14, 1997 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Deville Cinema, 1-55 North in Jackson.

The special program is for adults, both singles and married couples, and will explore ways to forge lasting, love-based relationships with those around us. The sessions are designed to help you become aware of how important strong, Christ-based relationships are to helping us live happier lives.

Dr. Trent is president of *Encouraging Words*, a ministry dedicated to strengthening relationships. He conducts the *Loving Relationships for a Lifetime* seminar nationwide, and over the past eight years he has presented this message to more than 85,000 people across the United States and Canada.

His books, written over his 12-year ministry, include *The Blessing*, *The Two Sides of Love*, *LifeMapping*, *Love for All Seasons* and *Go the Distance*. He is a frequent guest at Promise Keepers conferences nationwide, appears on *Focus on the Family* and 700 Club radio and television programs, and contributes articles to magazines such as *Christian Parenting* and *Focus on the Family*. The June 14th conference is being co-sponsored by radio stations WHJT-FM, WYJS-FM and WOAD-AM.

Admission cost is \$10.00 per person or \$15.00 for couples, and reservations are available by calling 948-6262 or 1-800-948-6262.

## Understanding the Benefits of Loving Relationships

Call 948-MBMC or 1-800-948-MBMC (6262)  
for reservations or more information.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

# Mississippians among NOBTS graduates

Receiving the master of divinity degree during NOBTS commencement exercises were: Barry Armstrong, youth minister at Maybank Church,



Five students with Mississippi ties received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises May 16. Standing with Charles S. Kelley Jr., seminary president (center) are (left to right): Lewis E. Ragins Sr., pastor of Morning Star Missionary Church, Gulfport; doctor of ministry degree in Christian education; David W. Carlton, pastor of Mt. Zion Church, Brookhaven, doctor of ministry degree; James A. Burnett, pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson, doctor of ministry degree in pastoral ministries; Dennis Rape of West Point, doctor of ministry degree in evangelistic church growth; and Chuck Strong, counselor at Northwest Mississippi Community College, Senatobia, doctor of philosophy degree in psychology and counseling.

## STAFF CHANGES

Ludlow Church, Scott Association, has called M. L. Wallace of Columbia as pastor effective May 18. A native of Bogue Chitto, Wallace received his education at Southwest Junior College - Whitworth. His previous place of service

was Hurricane Creek Church.

Maybank Church, Hattiesburg, has called Jerry Purvis as minister of music. A native of Hattiesburg, Purvis is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi.

Furrs, Pontotoc: June 8-13; Sunday, 11 a.m.; 7 p.m. each evening; Tom Atwood, Oxford, evangelist; Lester Mason, Tupelo, music; Walter Simmons, pastor.

Mt. Carmel, Edinburg: June 8-13; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; James Messer, Theodore, Ala., evangelist; Evelyn Dodds, Edinburg, music; Keith Fulton, pastor.

Maybank, Hattiesburg: June 20-22; Fri., and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, Sunday School, 9 a.m. and worship, 10 a.m.; Jerry Doggett, Petal, speaker; Billy Nelson, Macedonia, music; Bob Robinson, pastor.

Hattiesburg; Norris Cameron Grubbs, Pontotoc; Shelly Webb, currently associate director of the Baptist Student Union at Jones Junior Community College, Ellisville; Russell D. Moore, associate pastor and youth minister at Bay Vista Church, Biloxi; Timothy Paul Posey, itinerant missionary/evangelist for Lincoln Baptist Association, Brookhaven; Robert Netterville Jr., Vicksburg; James L. Nichols, pastor of Clear Branch Church, Wesson; James R. Hume, pastor of Bond Church, Wiggins; Higdon Boyd Herrington, Mathiston; Jay Clyde Michael, Senatobia; David A. McKenzie, Smithdale; John Elliott Reid, pastor of East Union Church, Magnolia; Roderick (Roddy) Dayton Reed, director and camp manager at Ervin Brown Training Center, Hernando;

Jeffery Stuart Gardner, Noxapater; and Bret J. Gilmore, pastor of New Zion Church, Monticello.

Receiving the master of arts in Christian education degree were: Trisha Tatum Price, preschool division director of Handsboro Church, Gulfport; Chris Webb, youth and activities minister at Calvary Church, Waynesboro; John Holland Brothers Jr., youth and youth music minister at Prentiss Church, Prentiss; Todd Johnson, Jackson; and Jennifer Colburn, Amory.

Receiving other degrees were Darren Byrd, Jackson, bachelor of arts; Weston J. Burnside Jr., Meridian, associate in pastoral ministry; Kenneth Hal Hatten, associate pastor of Shady Grove Church, Hazlehurst, associate in Christian studies; Mark A.

Beam, associate pastor of Belden Church, Belden, associate in pastoral ministries; and Max Terrell McGregor, pastor of Brewer Church, Shannon, associate in Christian studies.

## Revival results

**Hope, Philadelphia:** May 11-14; Danny Lanier, Little Rock, evangelist; William Crenshaw, Philadelphia, music; four professions of faith; Jimmy Young, pastor.

**Shiloh, Oxford:** May 4-7; Dale Ellenburg, Memphis, evangelist; Tom Foy, Memphis, music; one profession of faith; 254 in Sunday School on high attendance day; Ronnie Mayes, interim pastor.

## HOECOMINGS

Pleasant Grove Church, music; Victor Newell, Oxford, pianist; Kent H. Cochran, pastor.

**Slayden, Lamar:** July 6; activities during the day will include lunch at noon; Gary Adams, pastor.



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Harvey Overstreet, pastor.

**Hopewell, Bude:** June 8-13; Sunday services begin at 11 a.m. and evening services at 7 p.m.; Jack Evans, Greenbrier, Tenn., evangelist; Vance Woodcock, song leader; Cindy Demars, pianist; Rusty Bowlin, pastor.

**Rome (Sunflower):** July 20-23; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; J. G. Thomas, Friendship East Church, evangelist; Brent Garrison, Drew Church, music; Terry Tribble, pastor.

**Ebenezer, Ethel:** July 27-30; Sunday, 11 a.m.; 7:30 p.m. nightly; Dewitt Cutts, French Camp, evangelist; Tommie Overstreet, Vaiden, and Kenneth Mangrum, Ethel, music;

## BIBLE STUDY CRUISE

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ALL SIZES  
SALES AND RENTALS

# Stewardship publication to debut in fall

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — A new quarterly publication with principles and tools to build a biblical stewardship foundation for churches' needs will premiere this fall.

"Stewardship Journal: Strategies for Faith and Practice," produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board, will be released for the fall (September-October-November) quarter after the board assumes stewardship education and capital fund-raising as an assignment from the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

Gary L. Aylor, who became director of church stewardship services for the board in December, said the new four-

color magazine "comes to you directly from the hearts of men and women who care deeply about the principles of Scripture. We want to inspire and encourage others to obedience."

Aylor said the cover of the first issue features a photograph of the New York Stock Exchange and an accompanying explanation that the cover image is "instantly recognizable here and abroad as the center of global power and the symbol of wealth," yet noting "all temporal power is eclipsed by the cross, the greatest power the world has ever known. ... (B)eneath its shadow, mankind marches toward a personal meeting with the Creator of the universe, to

whom each shall give a personal accounting of all that has been entrusted to his care."

Recurring feature topics will include the biblical basis for stewardship, helps for budget and finance committees, financial trends in America today, capital fund-raising ideas and case histories, teaching aids for young children and youth, as well as stewardship program assistance and helps for large and small membership churches.

Planning for Stewardship Journal included a focus group of church staff persons, lay leaders, business leaders, state workers, and Sunday School Board staff. States represented included N.C., Fla., Ga., Texas, and Tenn.

Articles in the first issue include relational stewardship and believers' inability to out-give God, as well as stewardship truths for children and worshipping with tithes and offerings; and a range of informational articles and resources, including a drama written especially for the magazine.

Copies at \$3.95 quarterly may be ordered from the Customer Service Center, 127 Ninth Ave. N., Nashville, TN, 37234-0113; by fax at (615) 251-5933; or by electronic mail at customerservice@bssb.com.

ISBN number is 0-7673-8442-3 and will be listed on the dated literature order form beginning with the winter quarter.

## Southern graduates Miss. men

Two Mississippians were among the 179 students awarded degrees from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., during commencement exercises in May.

Receiving the master of divinity in Christian education was Michael Shane Hitchcock of Greenwood. Dwayne Cyril Doyle, Puckett, received the master of divinity degree.

## NAMES IN THE NEWS



**Phillip Raybon** was ordained to the ministry at Wade Church, Pascagoula, on May 4. The guest speaker was V. H. Eisaman from Chicago. Heavenly Hearts, Latrece Orozco, and Annette Beck presented special music. Pictured (from left) are Bill Barton, pastor; and Raybon and his wife Misty.

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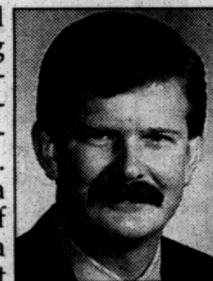
RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — James D. Warren, a national leader in Southern Baptist missions education, joined the staff of the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) in May. Warren wrote and edited Royal Ambassador materials and planned national training events for the Brotherhood Commission in

Memphis, Tenn., for 12 years. In his position with the FMB, he will assist missions leaders at every level of Southern Baptist life in planning and conducting global missions festivals and conferences. Warren is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla., and Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

He and his wife, the former Susan Garrett, have two sons, William and David.

Richard Shropshire, director of the Barnabas Center in D'Iberville, is available for revivals, concerts (with his wife Cheryl), and supply. He is also available for conferences on marriage and the family, as well as teaching conferences on other aspects of spiritual life. He can be reached at (601) 392-2608.

Clayton C. Bath was awarded the Pastor Emeritus status by Port Gibson Church, Port Gibson, during the morning service on May 25. Bath and his



Warren

wife were honored with a retirement tea for 25 years of service in the town and community of Port Gibson.

**Christopher M. LaPack**, formerly of New Albany, is among 86 graduates of Midwestern Seminary awarded diplomas during commencement exercises held May 17 at William Jewell College. LaPack received the master of divinity degree with honors. He was previously a member of First Church, New Albany, and currently serves as a youth minister at Northern Hills Church, Holt, Mo.



New Hope Church, Leake Association, licensed Brandon Tucker, 19, to the ministry. Pictured (from left) are E. C. Tucker, grandfather; Leslie Tucker, father; Brandon Tucker; and Bobby C. Barfoot, pastor.

## MEDICAL EVANGELISM TEAM TO ROMANIA NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

**Great Commission Ministries, The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Baptists of Romania invite you to be a part of a Medical/Evangelism team to Brasov, Romania on Sept. 5-14, 1997.**

The team will conduct medical clinics, personal evangelism, and Bible School daily. **Needed are Physicians, Dentists, Pharmacists, Nurses, Medical and Dental Assistants, BIBLE SCHOOL WORKERS, CLERICAL WORKERS, PASTORS, AND PEOPLE TO SHARE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST**

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# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Living moral lives

I Cor. 5:1-5, 9-13; 6:9-11

By Greg McBride

Everywhere you look these days the moral climate of our nation is in decline. Permissive lifestyles, disrespect for authority, divorce, abortion, pornography, and the list goes on detailing the erosion of the concept of right and wrong in America. The saddest indicator of this moral change is the degree to which it has filtered into the church. Church members are getting divorced. Ministers are caught in adultery, and Christian teenagers are getting abortions. In light of this, the church needs to pay close attention to Paul's instruction to the Corinthians on



McBride

maintaining high standards of morality in their personal lives and in their church.

### Grieve over

**Immorality (5:1-5).** The sin of sexual immorality and the church's indifference to it was the second major evil in the Corinthian congregation that Paul mentioned. The specific offense was one of incest. This conduct was so bad that even the Romans had outlawed it. Somehow the church had looked past this little detail in the life of one of its members. They were busy boasting of their growth in numbers—such is meant by Paul's accusation of their being arrogant. Rather than

boasting of their church, Paul told them they needed to mourn over the immorality within.

Please take note of what Paul means by mourning in this instance. Paul had already decided that the church should put this member out of the fellowship and he wanted the church to do

this as if he were there. In doing so the church would be delivering the man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit could be saved (v.5). In other words the church was to make the decision to discipline this wayward member by putting him out of the church, but they were to do it with a broken heart, knowing that in doing so they would be throwing him to the wolves so to speak.

**Get Rid of Immorality (5:9-13).** To help make his case for this church discipline, Paul

referred to a letter he had previously written to Corinth in which he instructed them not to associate with immoral people. From this letter the Corinthians thought Paul meant for them to separate from the world. Paul clarified that instruction here by saying that he intended for the church to separate from immoral people who identified themselves as Christians.

Today we are cautious when it comes to judging others, and with good reason. Here, however, Paul clearly states that the church is to turn a critical eye upon itself and judge whether a brother or sister is living in immorality. The church is not to judge the world, but it must judge itself. When the church finds immorality in its midst it must act to get rid of it.

### Be Cleansed of Immorality

(6:9-11). With great emphasis Paul then told the Corinthians that people who live immoral

lives would not inherit the kingdom of God. His list of immoral acts included sexual, social, and religious offenses. He then told the Corinthians that they too had once behaved in those sinful ways but that something had happened to them. They had been washed by the blood of Jesus. They had been set apart unto God, and they had been declared righteous before God (v.11). In other words, they too at one time were immoral, but God had made them clean. Only God can cleanse the sinner of his immoral lifestyle. The sinner has no power of himself.

How is the church to live moral lives? Paul says by grieving immorality in our midst instead of sanctioning it, by practicing tough love in the church to get rid of immorality, and by allowing God to cleanse us of immoral behavior.

*McBride is pastor, Kittiwake Church, Pass Christian.*

# FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

## Pursue Godliness

I Timothy 6:2-12

By Paul Blanchard

Throughout history, deadly epidemics have ravaged mankind. In the 14th century, the infamous "Black Death" (actually an outbreak of bubonic plague) killed millions in Europe. Our generation has witnessed the rapid spread of the fatal disease Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). More deadly than any of these diseases, however is the plague of false teaching that has afflicted the church throughout its history. While illness may kill the body, false teaching condemns the soul!

The Apostle Paul warned against false prophets or false teaching. Someone once said that every leader in the church should be a spiritual pathologist, able to discern deviations from

spiritual health. Paul wrote these verses to teach Timothy how to diagnose satanic darkness masquerading as divine light. He gives 7 symptoms that identify those infected with the spiritual disease of false teaching: their mark, attitude, mentality, effects, cause, condition, and motive.

One symptom of false teachings is what they affirm. It may deny God's existence or teach error about his nature and attributes. It may deny the Trinity or teach error concerning Christ's person. Those who deny his virgin birth, sinless perfection, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, or future return show signs of a dangerous false teaching. Another area of false teaching by false teachers is the attack of



Blanchard

the authenticity, inspiration, authority, or inerrancy of Holy Scripture. This area of false teaching is particularly prevalent in the modern church today.

In chapter 6, verses 11-12, Paul tells Timothy that believers are to shun negative influences, to seek godly virtues, and diligently maintain their faith. The title "man of God" is simple, yet rich. It is a sacred privilege to be identified as God's personal possession. This privilege also carries with it a grave responsibility. Although the phrase "man of God" is commonly used in the Old Testament, it describes only Timothy in the New Testament. Paul used that title to increase Timothy's sense of responsibility to discharge his ministry. The Old Testament uses of the phrase "man of God" point to an individual who proclaims God's word. By calling his young friend a "man of God" Paul places Timothy

into that rich Old Testament tradition.

In Chapter 6:9-10, Paul teaches that godliness with contentment is a great gain that can challenge adults to avoid lifestyles centered in materialism. Paul teaches Timothy in 6:9 that the sin of loving money is dangerous not only because of its nature, but also because of its effects. People who want to get rich are tempted strongly and often are caught in painful, debilitating sin like an animal in a snare. Their pursuit of what they want is their passion. These desires lead to the opposite of true happiness, because they have nothing whatsoever to do with the spiritual realm or the service of God.

The scriptures contain many tragic examples of those destroyed by the love of money. Achan's love for money brought defeat to Israel, and death to himself and his family in Joshua 7:1-26. Judas betrayed our precious Savior for a paltry sum of money in Matthew 27:3-5. In Acts 8:20-23, Peter sternly

rebuked Simon, who sought to buy the power of the Holy Spirit. James 5:1-5 also condemns those who love money.

Timothy was surely tempted to give up his ministry. Paul had to remind him that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of love and discipline. Timothy was in need of encouragement and strength to carry out his ministry. There is but one source of strength for those in the ministry — God. Confidence in him, and understanding of his character lays the foundation that brings courage and strength to face any trial.

The Apostle Paul gives the young preacher, Timothy, a magnificent presentation of God's character. This is to encourage the young follower to remain faithful, even in difficult times. We are encouraged by this passage to remain faithful. Remember, Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is sovereign!

*Blanchard is Director of Missions, Winston Association.*

# LIFE AND WORK

## Bible study

Psalm 119:10-11, 16, 18, 33-37, 57-60, 89, 137-138

By Becky Bennett

The story is told of a Bible distributor who visited a small village in Poland shortly before World War II and gave a Bible to a villager who read it and became a Christian. The new believer passed the book on to others. A cycle of conversions and sharing continued until hundreds of people had become believers through that one Bible. When the distributor returned several years later, the Christians met together for a worship service and asked him to preach. Before he began his sermon, he suggested that the congregation recite verses of



Bennett

scripture. One man stood and said, "Perhaps we have misunderstood. Did you mean verses, chapters or books?" The people had not memorized a few selected verses of the Bible but whole chapters and books. Transformed lives gave witness to the power of the Word of God. Does Bible study have this kind of priority in your life?

**Make Bible Study a Priority (119:10-11, 16).** Like the commercial we have heard so many times, the psalmist says, "Just do it." The only way to make Bible study a priority in our lives is to do it. In these verses

we find a recipe for keeping our life pure. We are to live actively according to God's word. God instructs us to seek him, and hide his words in our heart. We are to praise him and remember all the things he has done for us. Rejoicing and meditating should be a normal result of our Bible study. Delighting in God's word will keep us from neglecting it.

**Read and Study the Bible Prayerfully (119:18, 33-37).** Bible study and prayer go hand in hand. These verses are a prayer that asks God for understanding and wisdom. The psalmist is asking for a fuller understanding of what he already knows. We must avoid just reading words when we read the Bible. God brings new understanding each time we read his word. Have you ever

read a familiar scripture only to have the "light bulb" of new insight go off in your head? When we prayerfully study the Bible, God always rewards us with new understanding and wisdom. Our task is to wholeheartedly concentrate on keeping the instruction God gives.

**Obey the Bible's Truths (119:57-60).** One of the surest ways to have a victorious Christian life is to be in God's Word daily—read it, study it, obey it. Bible study is very important, but it is imperative to obey the truths we learn. How will we reach those around us and make a difference in the world if we don't obey the principles God teaches us? Obedience is the evidence of prayerful and careful Bible study.

**Recognize the Bible's Character (119:89, 137-138).** According to these verses, the Bible is righteous, just, fair,

trustworthy, and eternal. What wonderful character traits! God's Word reflects his character traits. We can learn about God and know God through studying his word. Christians can incorporate these same characteristics into their lives through reading, studying, and obeying the principles found in the Bible.

Most people in the United States have easy access to Bibles. Many homes have several on their shelves. So we often take the scriptures for granted. To experience for ourselves the Bible's transforming power, we must read and memorize it and apply its truth daily. Like the psalmist, we must hide the Word in our hearts. In the soul, not on the shelf, is where it takes root and produces godly lives.

*Bennett is Dean of Students at Blue Mountain College.*

# THE VILLAGE VIEW

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# Movie subject's life continues as witness

By Dana Williamson  
*Oklahoma Baptist Messenger*

LANE, Okla. (BP) — Eight seconds — the magic time for a bull rider.

It can seem like an eternity, both to the cowboy and the bucking animal, each intent on conquering the other.

Sometimes it is enough time to propel a person into eternity. In about that amount of time, world champion bull rider Lane Frost, 25, was speared by a bull he had just ridden and died on the rodeo arena floor.

His life became the subject of the popular cowboy film, "8 Seconds."

More eternally significant, as the prologue in a Bible produced in Frost's memory recounts, "On that day he left this Earth and entered his eternal home. Lane had discovered that this world isn't all there is to life."

"I believe if Lane had lived a full life and died at an old age," said Lane's mother, Elsie Frost, "his life would never have had the impact that it has had."

That impact includes eight people who declared their salvation at Lane's funeral and many others who have come to his mother to tell her they were saved as a result of Lane's death, including thousands who have received a copy of the cowboy Bible with an artist's drawing of Lane on the front.

The Bible is distributed through the home church of Lane's parents — Lane (Okla.) Church.

When a movie company asked to make a movie about Lane's life, Elsie said the family prayed and agonized over the decision.

"We decided to let them do a movie, hoping it would bring glory to God," Elsie said.

She was disappointed when the director of "8 Seconds" would not even consider putting Lane's salvation experience in the 1994 movie.

"I was devastated," Elsie said, "and went out behind the barn where they were filming and cried, 'God, how could you send someone like this to work on this movie when we prayed about it?'"

Even though the movie company did what it wanted with the story, the movie had "a much greater impact than we realized," Elsie recounted.

"After the movie, '8 Seconds,' came out, we were bombarded with phone calls and letters, and all were from people who wanted to tell us how the movie had made an impact on their lives."



Frost

Through all of the phone calls, Elsie said the main thing she wanted to tell people was that Lane was a Christian.

"To some, I had to explain how that happens, because you could tell they didn't know," she said.

Some friends of the Frosts brought some cowboy Bibles to the movie set in San Antonio, which were imprinted "given in memory of our brother, Lane Frost, 1987 world champion."

Elsie gave one to the director, who later told Lane's father, Clyde, it was one of the nicest gifts he had ever gotten.

Although the friends who brought the Bibles encouraged the Frosts to have some more printed, Elsie said she had too many complications in her life at the time.

On Valentine's Day 1995, Elsie said a friend came by and gave her a card.

"Inside the card was the exact amount of money I needed to order the Bibles," she said.

The Frosts contacted an artist to do a sketch of Lane for the front of the Bibles and put a personal message about Lane inside the front cover, along with the plan of salvation.

"As of now, we have given out about 7,000 Bibles, which have gone as far as Australia, Brazil, and the Panama Canal," Elsie said. "Although we accept donations, we give the Bibles free."

Elsie said she doesn't think it matters what is on the front of the Bible, "just as long as it makes people want it."

"If they want it because Lane's picture is on it, that's fine," she said. "I know that once it is in people's hands, God will do the rest."

"As proud as we are of Lane's accomplishments, we



RIDING HIGH — Lane Frost died doing what he loved, and his life story as told in the popular movie "8 Seconds" has provided a way for his Christian witness to live on in the hearts of thousands of people. (Photos courtesy Oklahoma Baptist Messenger)

know the most important thing he ever did was the (salvation) decision he made in 1988," Elsie said.

"Because of that, we know that he is in heaven and that we will be together again someday. We feel that God gave Lane that

special personality that drew people to him, and his death made a great impact on the rodeo world in particular.

"There have been a number of people saved because of Lane's death, so we can hardly ask why."

## 'Non-members' reach nearly 50%

OXNARD, Calif. (ABP) — Nearly half of Americans are "non-members" who "rarely engage in religious endeavor," according to new groupings that gauge the religious involvement of U.S. adults.

A study by The Angus Reid Group, a Canadian research firm, was profiled in the latest issue of The Barna Report, a product of the Barna Research Group, a surveyor of religious trends and issues.

Nearly half — 47% — were described as "non-members," those who rarely engage in religious activities or contribute to charitable causes. They tend to have limited education and do not keep up with current events, the study showed.

Other groupings identified by Reid researchers are:

♦ Religion First, about 17% of the population. These people are church members, and they also participate in several "religious

oriented efforts," such as Sunday School, small groups, and community service teams. They are the most involved in church."

♦ Community and Church, 10%. Members of this group generously volunteer their time and services and "exhibit a balance between faith and community work," Barna notes.

♦ Limited Involvement, 9%. They volunteer sparingly and do not get involved in any church-related efforts," the survey discovered. They restrict their affiliations and efforts to recreational, community or educational/cultural causes.

♦ Jobs and Culture, also 9%. These people are active in at least one professional or career-related organization, and they also tend to participate in educational or cultural non-profit organizations, the research revealed. However, their religious involvement is "limited, if at all existent."

As a group, they are the most highly educated Americans and stay abreast of current events, Barna says.

♦ Service and Seniors, about 8%. "One of the most widely involved groups are the elder citizens. Religious activity is one of their top priorities, but it competes for their attention along with social service, senior citizen programs, and support groups," he says.

About 40% of the people represented by this group are retired, and many are college graduates, the study found. They are described as well-informed and generous contributors to non-profit causes.

Compared to Canadians, the Reid survey found that Americans are twice as likely to attend church weekly, pray weekly, read the Bible weekly, interpret the Bible literally, and identify with the "Religious Right."

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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BHE NLAUX NQF MIH IG  
VBH PIFNQ, BM RN ZBM  
EFNFLVRHFE: CAN ZIF  
AHNI NQBN VBH CX  
ZQIV QF RM CFNLBXFE!  
UASF NZFHNX-NZI:  
NZFHNX-NZI

Clue: P equals G  
Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Nine Four.